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Issue 14

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This is the last *Smart Farming Bulletin* for 2011. You'll find the first issue for 2012 in your inbox in February. We wish you a peaceful and relaxing Christmas with your family and friends. Send us your questions or feedback anytime or email [smartfarming@maf.govt.nz](mailto:smartfarming@maf.govt.nz) to subscribe or unsubscribe.

## Snapshot 2010/2011 and new MAF Stock Exclusion Survey released

The Dairying and Clean Streams Accord – Snapshot of Progress for the 2010/11 dairy season, has been released alongside the Stock Exclusion Survey, an independent MAF-commissioned survey of stock exclusion from Accord-type waterways.

This season's Snapshot shows that like last season, two out of five of the Accord's targets have been met and progress has been made towards the others.

The Snapshot shows that dairy cattle are excluded from Accord-type waterways on 84 percent of farms, and the Stock Exclusion Report states 78 percent of Accord waterway stream length is protected and 42 percent of farms have 100 percent stock exclusion on their farm.

The Accord expires in 2012. The dairy industry is now consulting with all stakeholders to seek their views on what form a successor to the Accord could take and what value it would have. An announcement is expected by late 2012.

Link to DCSA Snapshot of Progress: <http://www.maf.govt.nz/news-resources/publications.aspx?title=DairyingandCleanStreamsAccord:SnapshotofProgress>

Link to Stock Exclusion Survey Report 2011: <http://www.maf.govt.nz/Default.aspx?TabId=126&id=1244>

## The proof is in the pudding – so MAF has tested the pudding and found it is safe to eat

MAF has just released the Total Diet Study, an extensive study done in 2009 which shows that foods commonly eaten by New Zealanders do not contain harmful levels of chemical residues or contaminants.

The Study tested foods for residues of 241 agricultural compounds and all were found to be well below the acceptable daily intake levels.

Testing for the specific elements lead, mercury, cadmium and arsenic also showed no cause for concern.

Cadmium tends to accumulate in soils where there is regular use of phosphate fertiliser, and while New Zealand soils and foods have levels far below what would cause an adverse health effect, a Cadmium Management Strategy has been developed to ensure risks continue to be properly managed and minimised.

Read the full Total Diet Study: <http://www.foodsafety.govt.nz/policy-law/food-monitoring-programmes/total-diet-study/documents.htm>

Read the Cadmium Management Strategy: <http://www.maf.govt.nz/news-resources/publications.aspx?title=Cadmium>

## Welfare Pulse out now

The latest issue of MAF's animal welfare magazine Welfare Pulse is out now and can be viewed online [here](#). Feature articles include research results telling us what New Zealanders think about animal welfare and new information about humane and effective pest control.

It is free to subscribe. You can get a copy sent to you by email – just sign up for alerts at the [MAF website](#) by ticking the “Welfare Pulse magazine” option.

## Primary Growth Partnership funding

A reminder that the next application round for the Primary Growth Partnership will occur in the first half of next year. Details, including closing dates, will be announced on the [MAF website](#).

## MAF animal welfare prosecution

A Northland dairy farmer was recently convicted of failing to provide treatment for an animal under the Animal Welfare Act. Fraser McBeth was sentenced after an investigation by MAF found that he knew a cow in his care was suffering from 'cancer eye' and he did not seek treatment for it.

After sentencing, MAF said such cases were simply unacceptable – particularly as in this situation the problem could have been successfully treated if assessed early on when symptoms became apparent. [Read the prosecution media release](#) to find out more.

## Primary sector still on target for record income

The primary sector is still on target for record export income this year, a Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry report shows.

The outlook, while still strong, has weakened slightly since the release of the annual Situation and Outlook for New Zealand Agriculture and Forestry (SONZAF) report in June.

This is the result of continuing challenges in some overseas economies, causing a mark-down in export revenue expectations for dairy, forestry, meat and wool of \$930 million or 3.5 percent for the year to June 2012.

MAF has released a half-year update which shows New Zealand climatic conditions in spring 2011 were favourable for milk production and lambing. MAF expects overall pastoral production for the 2011/12 season to be above average.

For more information, go to the full half-year report: <http://www.maf.govt.nz/news-resources/publications.aspx?title=Situation and Outlook for New Zealand Agriculture and Forestry>

## Have your say on NAIT levies

Public submissions are open on the proposed funding for the industry's share of NAIT's ongoing operating costs.

NAIT Ltd – the industry-owned company establishing the scheme – is seeking submissions on proposed levy amounts and how they are collected from cattle and deer farmers. About \$7 million will need to be collected during the scheme's first year.

NAIT uses electronic ear tags to individually and accurately identify cattle and deer from birth to death or live export, which will speed up responses to any biosecurity threat. Pending the passing of new laws early next year, NAIT cattle obligations will take effect from 1 July 2012. Deer join the scheme on 1 March 2013.

The consultation document is available on [NAIT Ltd's website](#). You'll need to be quick – submissions close 23 December.

## Ahuwhenua Trophy entries close next month

Māori dairy farmers have just a few weeks left to get their entry in for the next Ahuwhenua Trophy.

The competition dates back to 1932 and was established by Sir Apirana Ngata and Lord Bledisloe to recognise the top Māori farming operations in Aotearoa. MAF has returned as a sponsor for the next competition.

Judges look at a range of criteria including the farm's governance and management, efficiency, and financial performance. They also take into account the effect of any conditions that may have affected financial performance such as drought and market returns.

Previous entrants have found the competition a worthwhile experience that offers many benefits. It's a chance to step back and think about your farm and your management decisions, talk with judges and other farmers to help build connections and bring new ideas to improve farm performance.

Regional winners will host public field days in the lead up to the announcement of the national winner at a gala awards dinner in Auckland in mid-2012. There are cash prizes and farm-related products are up for grabs, too.

Entries close 27 January 2012. Pick up an entry form from Te Puni Kōkiri or Māori Trustee offices. You can also request one by sending an email to [Joan Nathu](#) or download a copy from the [Ahuwhenua Trophy website](#).

Want to know more? [Watch videos of previous finalists sharing their experiences of competing in the Ahuwhenua Trophy](#).

## ETS Forest land applications

ETS (post-89 forest) registrations now total 1750 participants for a total of 245 000 ha. Of these 1750 participants, 360 meet the criteria for the Field Measurement Approach (100 hectares or more forest) with 203 000 hectares.

Emission returns are accepted from 1 January to 31 March every year. Units are normally issued within five to 20 working days from acceptance of a complete return.

Last year, there were 9.2 million units issued. Since the scheme started in 2009 MAF has received 14.4 million Units.

MAF received a last minute surge of pre-1990 exemption and allocation applications before their respective closing dates in September and November. In total, just under 1.3 million hectares of pre-1990 forest land has either been included in an exemption or allocation application.

## CASE STUDY

This case study is one in a series called Adapting to a changing climate: Case Study 3.

### Sustainability and profitability – A Rangitaiki Plains dairy farm

David Law is 50:50 sharemilking on the family farm located in Edgecumbe in the Bay of Plenty. Sustainability and profitability go hand-in-hand as far as he is concerned. “When you look at sustainability, we’ve got our finger on the pulse and we’re going to do more and more of that to make money out of what we’re doing.”

Driven by concerns about the amount of urea going on the farm, David changed to a biological fertiliser programme five years ago. Since then, the farm has been through the 2004 flood and the 2007/08 drought. The farm’s recovery from these events highlighted the benefits of what they were doing and provided impetus for further change.

What has emerged is a redesign of the whole farm operation. “What we’re trying to achieve is to be more self-reliant and try and keep our costs to a minimum,” says David.

Check out this case study and others by clicking this link:

<http://www.maf.govt.nz/environment-natural-resources/climate-change/resources-and-tools.aspx>